

Stages and Oregon Alternate Assessment

OVERVIEW

Stages includes two major software components: (a) informal assessment software and (b) curriculum software. Stages informal assessment software is instructional in nature, providing activities with constructive feedback and opportunities for the learner to explore and choose. Stages curriculum software is a collection of interactive daily instructional programs appropriate for learners at each Stage.

Stages software enhances the Oregon's alternate assessment process because:

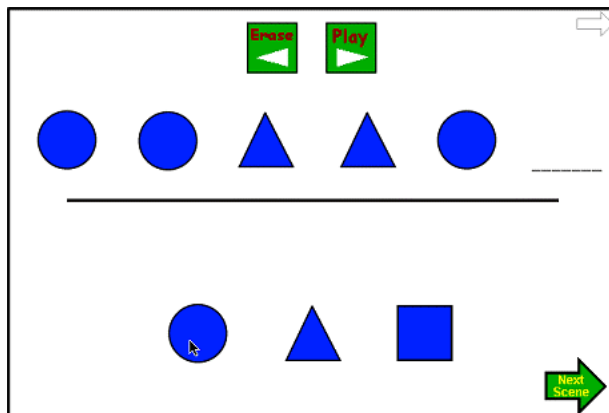
1. **Stages aligns with Oregon's Content Standards at Benchmark Level 1 (Grade 3) for English and Mathematics.**
2. **Stages generates records of achievement.**
3. **Stages provides learners with the opportunity for increased independence.**
4. **Stages assists the learner's IEP team with selecting assistive technology and assessment tools.**

- **Stages aligns with Oregon's Content Standards at the Benchmark Level 1 (Grade 3) for English and Mathematics.**

Stages ensures meaningful and effective access to general curriculum areas. Stages content aligns with the content standards in Grade 3 Mathematics and English, plus "functional" skills such as identification of street signs. The instructor can also use the information from activity reports to determine whether the learner should challenge a different Benchmark. Please refer to the section entitled "How Stages Correlates with Oregon Content Standards" for detailed matching between Stages informal assessment software and specific curriculum standards.

- **Stages generates records of learner achievement.**

It can be a challenge for the IEP team to document progress for learners requiring accommodations. During Stages software activities, the instructor can print directly from any screen to capture a learner-generated product.



Example screen shot from Stage Four: Create Patterns

At the end of each activity, a report with instructional data about the time spent, choices made, response accuracy or work product, input method, prompt type, and time/date stamp are displayed with the learner's name. The instructor may wish to then print that screen or save the information as a text-format electronic file.

Observation guidelines and forms in the Stages kits help the instructional team make the most out of an activity session. The data-gathering features of the software enable the observer to focus on noting the learner's behavior and thinking-out-loud responses. Two adults from the instructional team can work together: one adult can encourage the learner and the other can note valuable data about behaviors without being noticed by the learner. Alternatively if a video or still camera is available, it may be directed at the learner and the computer monitor to discreetly record interactions and other behaviors while one adult coaches. During the sessions, the learner will be less conscious of her performance being recorded, making her responses more candid. Over time, the collected data will provide evidence that the instructional team needs to build a complete picture of the learner's skill achievement.

- **Stages provides learners with the opportunity for increased independence.**

The feedback in Stages activities is encouraging and rewarding, providing a relaxed setting for exploring topics and demonstrating skills with minimal supervision. Many Stages activities include accessible choice-making opportunities. Functional skills activities include various community settings.

- **Stages assists the learner's IEP team with selecting assistive technology and assessment tools.**

An objective of Stages software is to provide several options for input methods and other settings so that the learner's instructor, parents, and others in the IEP team can determine his ideal learning and communication environment. Different devices, auditory feedback, speeds and prompts are among the variables.

SUMMARY

Stages augments the Oregon alternate assessment cycle. The Stages software is a comprehensive benchmark tool to assist the instructional team in collecting valuable information on learner skill achievement, determine assessment strategy, and discover the learner's abilities and thinking approach.

How Stages Correlates with Oregon Content Standards¹

Mathematics Benchmark 1 (Grade 3)

CALCULATIONS AND ESTIMATIONS

Computation: Perform whole number calculations using paper and pencil and calculators.

Students will:

- add three-digit whole numbers with regrouping.
- subtract three-digit whole numbers with regrouping.
- multiply single digit numbers.
- divide two-digit whole numbers by single-digit whole numbers with no remainder.
- identify simple fractions with numerators and single-digit common denominators from pictorial representations.

Related Stages Activities

Stage Five: *Math:* Math Facts (+, -, x, ÷), Fractions

Math Facts includes addition and subtraction questions with and without regrouping. *Fractions* problems include illustrations of common items such as pizza and groups of animals.

MEASUREMENT

Direct Measurement: Measure length, perimeter, [weight,] area, time, [and temperature] using standard and nonstandard units of measurement.

Students will measure in:

- length and perimeter--inches, feet, yards, centimeters.
- area--square units.
- time--minutes, hours, [days].

Related Stages Activities

Stage Five: *Math:* Geometry

Stage Six: *Explore and Assess:* Telling Time

Stage Five *Geometry* activities include standard and nonstandard units in questions involving area, perimeter and volume. *Telling Time* in Stage Six involves real-life scenarios as well as both digital and analog clocks.

¹Information found in the Oregon Content Standards (Mathematics and English), published June 2001 for school year 2001-2002, by the Oregon Department of Education.

Source: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/cimcam>. Accessed April 15, 2002.

STATISTICS AND PROBABILITY

Interpretation of Data: [Collect, organize, display,] and describe simple data using charts, tables, number lines, bar graphs, and line graphs.

Students will interpret data from charts or tables with five or fewer entries; horizontal or vertical bar graphs with five or fewer bars; and pictographs that represent ten or fewer data pieces.

Related Stages Activities

Stage Five: Math: Charts and Graphs

Stage Five *Charts and Graphs* activities also include pie charts. Activity questions refer to relative amounts as well as quantities represented by the charts and graphs.

ALGEBRAIC RELATIONSHIPS

Representations of Mathematical Relationships:

Represent and describe relationships between two quantities using words, symbols, pictures, and/or manipulatives.

Related Stages Activities

Stage Five: Math: Estimation

Stage Five *Estimation* activities present the learner with questions about relative quantities in the context of scenarios.

Recognize, create, describe, and extend numeric and geometric patterns.

Students will:

- supply an element that is missing from a pattern.

Related Stages Activities

Stage Four: Math Readiness: Explore Patterns, Continue/Fill-In Patterns, Create Patterns

These activities introduce the learner to simple linear patterns using shapes, color, and sound.

GEOMETRY

Concepts and Properties:

Identify geometric shapes in natural and constructed environments.

Students will recognize, [describe,] and provide real-world counterparts for:

- triangles.
- quadrilaterals--rectangle, square.

Related Stages Activities

Stage Four: Shapes: Explore and Assess

The learner identifies shapes (also including circles and ovals) in isolation, drawings and in photographs of real-life scenes.

Identify properties of geometric figures [and combinations of shapes].

Students will identify properties of geometric figures by:

- determining which shape does not belong to a group of shapes.

Related Stages Activities

Stage Five: *Problem Solving:* Mystery Shape

The learner compares and eliminates shapes according to clues, to identify a mystery shape.

English Benchmark 1 (Grade 3)

READING

Students will:

- use illustrations such as pictures, charts, graphs, or diagrams to help determine the meaning of words in the passage.

Students will:

- use information in illustrations, [charts, graphs,] and diagrams to help understand a reading passage.

Related Stages Activities

Stage Five: *Math:* Word Problems (+, -, x, ÷)

Stage Six: *Stories:* Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan

Stage Five *Word Problems* includes drawings to aid the learner in computing the solution to written problem. Stage Six *Stories* are short illustrated passages presented as text, auditory narration, or both. The learner can proceed through the activities at any pace.

Students will:

- use a glossary to locate words and/or help clarify word meaning.

Related Stages Activities

Stage Five: *Reading:* Letters

Stage Five *Letters* help the learner practice and demonstrate alphabetization skills in preparation for learning how to locate words in a dictionary or index.

LITERATURE

Students will:

- identify a story, poem, play, or a non-fiction selection.

Related Stages Activities

Stage Five: *Reading:* Sounds

Stage Six: *Stories:* Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan

Stage Five *Sounds* introduces the learner to rhyming pairs in preparation for learning about poems. Stage Six *Stories* are all fully accessible so the learner can independently choose.

WRITING

Students will:

- develop an identifiable beginning, middle, and end.
- sequence events
- use some transitions.

Related Stages Activities

Stage Seven: Making Stories

Making Stories is an accessible way for a learner to independently produce written expression for work samples. A photo may be imported or the learner can choose from a menu of photos as a writing prompt.

Students will:

- correctly spell words appropriate to benchmark level.
- limit use of phonetic spelling to uncommon or difficult words.
- use correct subject-verb agreement in simple sentences.
- use correct end of sentence punctuation.
- correctly place commas in dates and in a series.
- correctly capitalize sentence beginnings, proper nouns, titles, and the pronoun “I.”

Related Stages Activities

Stage Seven: Making Words: Copy Words

Making Sentences: Spelling and Grammar

Stage Seven *Spelling and Grammar* activities present the learner with sentences to edit for spelling, homonyms, noun-verb agreement, word order, capitalization, and punctuation. Customizability allows the instructor to create lists of words or sentences and save them for later use with other learners.